Mr. James Earl Ray, 65477
P.O.Box 73
Petros, Tenn. 37845

11/15/76

Dear Jimmy,

I did not see your letter of the 8th until now because I've been away since early the morning of the 9th.

That it is intemperate does not bother me. That it confirms what I've long feared and tried to communicate to you does concern me.

If I did not make clear to you by the carbons I sent you that my purposes are no more than protecting your rights I'm sorry. I think I did make this clear and that you merely refuse to see it. If trying to inform you is a futility there is no purpose served by trying to inform you and I can use the time for what has a chance of serving a useful purpose, including useful to you.

If you refuse to believe that Washington and Washington-related power operates as I've told you that is your affair. I believe I have told you accurately and that it does not have your interest at heart.

I'm sorry that you cannot look back on the mistakes you've made so you might learn from them and not repeat them, as I am that you appear to be unable to understand what possibilities you may still have and not inpede or damage them.

If you will take the time to review the past you will see that whether or not you agreed with me I have spent a great amount of time trying to inform you so that your prospects would be better and your understanding greater and less inhibited by your trying to interpret these things in terms of your past experiences, which do not prepare you for what without doubt are realities.

There is absolutely no basis for your apparent belief that I do undertake to represent myself as your spokesman or ever have. Or will. There is a long record that could not be more exactly opposite this, you know it, so I find myself wondering why you say it. I remind you of merely one to your knowledge. When Frame-Up appeared you wanted me to use the fact that I was your investigator to promote the book. I wrote and told you that I would not because I believed this was not to your interest. You were right in believing that it would help sell the book and that the contents of the book could be helpful to you. The sales certainly would have been helpful to me. But aside from moral and ethical considerations I had to look ahead and not be unaware of your rights and needs and how this might be used against you. You are aware that the effort was made and was unsuccessful. If I had been selfish or had listened to you that effort would not have been unsuccessful.

You refuse to understand the harm to you than can come from the misuse of the ~~poison~~ poison in official files. I did explain it. It is I who added the extra protection and assurances to you in the release I'm drafted. I have no interest in details of your personal life, have never investigated them and have learned only what others have volunteered. I regard them as irrelevant. There simply is no basis for what you say. I have in the past indicated to you that I was aware so you would know and so that you might be better prepared to face your own hangups over them. That you have not has been hurtful to your interests. If you had responded as you should have responded it is not impossible that all since could have been entirely different. Your really are not Perry Mason. And in the modern world there is something wrong with the head of those who do not have some kinds of hangups. However, become their captive is self-destructive. Please try to think about this and the other fictions you appear to believe, including about me.

You really are bugs if you can even suggest, after reading my letters, that I said or suggested or even hinted that I speake for you. Get with it. If I can understand your frustration I see no reason for your taking them out on me. I have never exploited you, I have refused to and as you well know what I have been done has not been with or for personal profit. This whole things seems to be entirely unlike you.

Now you prate to me about having spent 5 or six years getting the evidentiary hearing. You also say you will not go through these kinds of years again. Well, I don't think that anybody would want to. I certainly don't want you to. But what you refuse to face is your own responsibility in this as it relates to the past and the future both. I also look back on most of these years. In all that time I can think of nothing of any real consequence you have done to help your defense and much that you should have done and did not that could and would have helped it. I discussed the possibilities of the futurem and not in terms of 5 or 6 years with you in October 1974, November 1975 and January of this years. You saw it differently and thereby assured at the least the waste of much time and effort, as you always have in the past by this solitary-confinement consequence of regarding yourself as omniscient and infallible. I'm sorry about it but you have created these conditions and there is nothing I can do about that.

If you can think of one thing I have done to cause these years to be spent as you have spent them or one thing that was not in your interest or one thing that was for my personal benefit or of any advice I gave you that turned out to be bad I ask you to tell me about it. I'm not bitter about this because I do recognise that the rotten conditions of your confinement were intended to accomplish this kind of influance on your thinking. I tried to get you to read a study showing this but even that you refused.

I don't care what you think of me personally except as it can and has hurt you. It is to try to get you to see this that I have asked you what one thing I have ever done that has in any way hurt you. Now I'm going to tell you the opposite and in ways you can understand if you will let yourself. You can get confirmation from Jim.

In all the time I've known you and for years before I have had no regular income. I'm 63, I've had a serious thrombophlebitis and the results are permanent and serious, as Jim can tell you because I asked his wife, who is a doctor, to check the medical records. I have no retirement or retirement income. Yet I've given Jim what I could to use as I am sure he will tell you in your interest. So far this year, aside from what I have spent msyelf, I'm sure this has come to at least $1,000. This week it will be a little more than that. I've just spent a week in which I travelled the equivalent of accross the country and in this time did not average more than four hours' sleep a night to earn an honorarium. When the check clears my bank I'll deduct my actual expenses only and give Jim a check for the balance plus another $200 that is being given me. Infrequently a few people di give me these kinds of contributions. I do not keep them. I give them all to Jim. He has been keeping a separate record of them in his books. I have asked him to improve this by setting up a separate account and he has agreed to. By the end of this year this will come to about $3,000, perhaps more.

You owe me nothing for this and I'm asking nothing of you for it. However, you do owe yourself something for it. But your head together if you can before it is too late.

Considering the past yours is an insulting letter. I do not care personally. I do care as it reflects what has for so long been so hurtful to you. Howeber, no matter how insulting you may be I am not going to be turned off by it and I am going to do what I can that can be helpful. Understand this or not as you see fit or can.

I do not believe it will do any good to assure you that it is sick to say as you do that I am seeking to "gain access to some whorehouse I migyt have been in" but I do assure you that I have done no such thing, have no interest in any such thing and have with some success been doing quite the opposite. Look into your own mind and attitudes. Sincerely,